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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Environment and sustainable development: water supply and sanitation

Letter dated 26 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a note verbale, dated 30 December 2000 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in Tehran, concerning the blockage of the water flow into the Hirmand River in the Islamic Republic of Iran, causing enormous damage to the agriculture and animal husbandry of the people of the region (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 46 and 95 (c), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hadi **Nejad-Hosseinian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful

The blockage of the water flow into the Hirmand River in the Islamic Republic of Iran since 8 March 2000, which continues today, has caused enormous damage to the agricultural and animal husbandry of the people of the region. The indigenous people of the region are in fact facing great difficulties in obtaining their drinking water supplies. Moreover, the internationally recognized wetland of Hamun has been completely dried out. Whereas Afghanistan, in accordance with the Treaty on Hirmand concluded between the two countries on 13 March 1973, is bound to provide Iran with 26 cubic metres of water per second on average, in a joint inspection carried out in Tir 1379 (July 2000) by two technical teams from Iran and Afghanistan to the Kajaki dam and the hydrometric station at Dehrawud, which is the base for the measurement of water in the Hirmand River, the two teams jointly concluded that the flow of water at the hydrometric station at Dehrawud was 46.8 cubic metres per second and that the Kajaki dam had 1 billion cubic metres of water in reserve. The inspection team also observed that the main cause of the water blockage was the closure of the gates of the Kajaki dam, which prevented the flow of water towards Iran.

In consideration of the above-mentioned points and invoking article V of the 1973 Treaty on Hirmand, which stipulates that "Afghanistan agrees that it shall take no action to deprive Iran totally or partially of its water right to the water of the Hirmand River as fixed and delimited by the provisions of articles II, III and IV of this Treaty", the Islamic Republic of Iran urges that the Hirmand waters be permitted to flow through the shared Parian River. Iran reserves its right to seek compensation for the damage caused by the breach of the said Treaty and the blockage of the Hirmand waters and will take all steps at its disposal to ensure the utilization of its water rights.

30 December 2000